

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5352

As Reported By House Committee On:
Local Government

Title: An act relating to terms of members of boundary review boards.

Brief Description: Removing the term limit for members of boundary review boards.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State & Local Government (originally sponsored by Senator McCaslin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 3/29/99 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Removes the service limitation of a maximum eight consecutive years for boundary review board members.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Mulliken, Republican Co-Chair; Scott, Democratic Co-Chair; Ericksen; Fisher and Fortunato.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Mielke, Republican Vice Chair.

Staff: Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

Background:

A boundary review board is required to be created in every county with a population of 210,000 or more and may be created in any other county. If its jurisdiction is invoked, a boundary review board may review proposed boundary changes for cities, towns, and various special districts. The boundary review board may approve, reject, or modify and approve a proposed boundary change that it reviews. A boundary review board's authority to reject or modify and approve proposed city incorporations is limited.

The boundary review board in a county with a population greater than one million consists of 11 members: three appointed by the Governor; three appointed by the county; three appointed by the mayors of the cities and towns within the county; and two appointed by the board from nominees of special districts in the county. The boundary review board in all other counties consists of five members: two appointed by the Governor; one appointed by the county; one appointed by the mayors of the cities and towns within the county; and one appointed by the board from nominees of special districts in the county.

After an initial staggering of members' terms, appointed boundary review board members serve four-year terms. No boundary review board member may serve more than eight consecutive years.

Summary of Bill:

The maximum service limitation of eight consecutive years for boundary review board members is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: This bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The boundary review boards make vital decisions, and it is important to have people with experience and institutional knowledge serving on these boards. Boundary review board members must understand a variety of complex statutes and determine how a proposal relates to these statutes, and many people may not be willing to make the commitment to serve on these boards.

This bill does not change the appointment process for boundary review board members; it simply creates the opportunity for members to serve for more than eight years if they have the desire to do so and if they are reappointed. This bill may assist boundary review boards losing several experienced members at the same time because of the term limits.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Senator McCaslin, prime sponsor; Gene Jenkins, Yakima County Boundary Review Board; and Miriam Graves, State Boundary Review Board Association.